

# ENTERTAINMENT ★ DINING OUT

## Torrance's Alma Nelson Given Star Billing in Play

On the strength of excellent performances, Torrance's statuesque Alma Nelson soars to star billing in the production of the play, *Clotfield*, which is creating a lot of advance interest in Long Beach. Clotfield is the story of the part-white girl who grew up in Thomas Jefferson's household and believed she was his daughter; by a Negro mistress, Hester. The original book was written by William Wells Brown, an escaped slave who self-educated his way to renown in England, Pearl M. Graham, with the assistance of Mr. Boyea, did the adaptation.

A highly popular member of the cast, Alma Nelson plays Dorothea Dandridge Henry (Mrs. Patrick Henry) who befriends both Clotfield and her mother, Hester. A most poignant moment in the play takes place when the slave Clotfield tells of killing her baby to save it from slavery and Mrs. Henry recalls losing her own child through miscarriage. Alma also more than holds her own in a bristling verbal duel with Thomas Jefferson (Jim Grosa). So pleased was the producer, British Guiana-born Samuel A. Boyea, newspaper drama critic and a playwright himself, with the talented Torrance

actress, that he chose Mrs. Nelson to also play the narrator's part of *The American Conscience* which bridges the spiritual gulf between the past and the present of this American dilemma.

Huntington Hartford, who has helped the production, is contemplating the first rights to a New York production of the play early next year.

Clotfield opens Friday night, Nov. 1, at 8:30 p.m. at Morgan Hall Playhouse and will run for three weeks.

## 'Flower Drum Song' at Melodyland

"Flower Drum Song," one of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein's great Broadway hits, bows into Melodyland Theatre in Anaheim, on Tuesday night, Nov. 5 for a two-week run. Production is the last of Melodyland Theatre's Summer season. The current occupant of the theatre-in-the-round, closes Sunday night, Nov. 3.

Starring in the role of Wang Ta, is the sensational Hawaiian-born singer, James Shigata, while a perk, young beauty, Lulu Porter, surprise winner of the 1963 International Song Festival in Poland last September, plays Linda Low, Tim Herbert and lovely Yau Shan Tung, both of the original London production of "Flower Drum Song," portray the parts of Sammy Fong and Hei Li.

The Messrs. Rodgers and Hammerstein have contributed some of their loveliest songs to "Flower Drum Song," which was first presented on Broadway in 1958. These include "I Enjoy Being a Girl," originally introduced and made popular by dynamic Pat Suzuki, and "Don't Marry Me," first sung by Miyoshi Umeki. Other significant musical numbers are "You Are Beautiful," "Love Look Away," and "The Other Generation."

"Flower Drum Song" is the last of 10 stage productions presented at Melodyland Theatre on the 1963 schedule, which opened July 2. Next on the agenda will be the joint appearance of Dinah Shore and Bob Newhart, set to open for a week's run on Tuesday, Nov. 19.

### ORIGINALITY

We are all capable of more than we do.

— Mary Baker Eddy

### GENIUS

Genius is only a superior power of seeing.

— John Ruskin



THEME OF the 1964 Auto Show "Hollywood's Golden Years" inspired Los Angeles designer Eve Gosser to create for Auto Show Queen Pamela Gail a gown "reminiscent of the soft and easy lines worn by the stars of the golden 30's and still featuring a new look to the future." The Auto Show Queen models the gown before the Cobra, one of the advanced experimental sports cars of the more than 400 new 1964 cars in the Auto Show, Pan Pacific Auditorium. Show closes Sunday, November 3.



FOUR ACT COMEDY at the Chapel Theatre features above front, Sallie Conrad, as Lady Hurl; Warren Lavender as Lord Edgard and Jeannie Appel as Juliette. In the rear are: Warren Dieter who plays the father and Dennis Morgan the son. "Thieves Carnival" will play at the Chapel through November 16, with curtain time 8:30 each evening.

### ORIGINALITY

A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes

## FROM THE WINGS

By Betty Schroeder

A living tableau is the preface to an evening of fun, frolic and frivolity at Chapel Theatre in Torrance when "Thieves Carnival" is presented in a four-act comedy by Jean Anouilh. When pixie-type Noel Shire of Torrance appears as The Maestro, in his clown-jester type costume and makeup, and transforms each character in the tableau into life with his magic baton, you are instantly aware that there are many surprises in store for you during the next short hours. Not only is this a delightfully entertaining play for the audience, but for the actors as well as each can, and does, go all out in the way of comedy as far as characterizations are concerned. This production encompasses every phase of comedy situation imaginable except, thankfully, the slapstick and from the beginning tableau to the ending tableau, by which the actors cleverly take their numerous curtain calls, viewers are delightfully entertained.

Beach outshines himself as a director-actor in this strenuous undertaking. As the role itself is a difficult one, added to this responsibility is the directing of an ambitious production, which turned into a thing of great satisfaction to the entire cast and crew, judging by the audiences' spontaneous reactions to their endeavors. The pickpockets are a threesome unto themselves and not to be outdone by anyone as they masquerade in their many disguises. Their precise timing in actions and facial expressions is a thing of beauty and it is quite apparent that the rehearsals were stressed with the audiences' reactions in mind. With the help of Mitzi Phillips who was choreographer for The Maestro's pantomime and cavorting and also coordinated the three thieves' zany antics, this timing was accomplished most effectively. Fred West of Los Angeles as Peterbono proved once again his versatility as an actor, especially in the comedy line, as he throws himself fully into the role of leader of the thieves. Ed Rice of Hollywood as Gustave is a newcomer to Chapel and makes quite a hit as the romantic, and not so zany, third of the pickpockets. This threesome creates enough entertainment among themselves to carry the play, so that with the additional talent, it is impossible to guarantee anything but an evening of complete let - your - hair - down merriment. Always a delight to have on stage at Chapel is Jeannie Appel of Torrance who is Juliette, sweetheart of Gustave, and chalks up another hit to add to her theatre credits. Lovable Warren Lavender of Mermosa Beach, who portrays Lord Edgard, has been dubbed many titles by cast and crew

apart, pieced together and designed all the costumes in this production. Endless hours were spent at the theatre and home in effecting the result which is shown on stage in brilliant color, styling and fantasy. Her seamstresses include Ruth Rockwell, Mabel Monteleone, Maxine Cusick, Mary Lee Jenks, Margot Lohr, Mildred Murphy, Dorothy McAdams, Karen Karagel and Margie Tankersly, all receiving the heartfelt thanks of the cast for a wonderful job done. Ed Long also has special praise for the backstage crew consisting of Frank Corsetino, assistant director; Romona Bingham, producer; Rudl Medina, stage manager; Don Hoover, George Bingham and Marty Steffler, lights and sound; Lynda Gorchester, props, set dressings by Phyllis Palmer, with foyer display by Lyle Smith.

The following nights are the only ones available for reservations and it is suggested that early calls to box office FR 2-9636 be made: Friday, Nov. 1, Saturdays, Nov. 2, 9, and 16. Last performance of "Thieves Carnival" will be Saturday, Nov. 16, curtain at 8:30 p.m. each evening.

### Round the Clock

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